



TOWN OF MONSON
BOARD OF HEALTH
110 Main Street
Monson, MA 01057

WORKING IN A CHANGED WORLD
STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

2014 Report of the Monson Board of Health

Local Boards of Health in Massachusetts are required by state statutes and regulations to perform the following duties. They must: 1) Regulate and protect the community's general health through disease control and health care. 2) Inspect, issue permits and enforce state sanitary code standards for local housing and dwellings. 3) Inspect and issue permits for residential septic systems under Title 5 regulations. 4) Inspect and issue permits for food service and food production establishments, pools, camps, motels, caterer's, bakery licenses, residential kitchens, funeral directors, frozen dessert/ice cream licenses, mobile food vendors, offal transport licenses, retail food, privately contracted rubbish removal, tobacco products, retail only selling of beef/pork, disposal installer licenses and mobile home parks. 5) Regulate solid waste, hazardous waste, garbage and nuisances injurious to public health, including air pollution and tobacco regulations. 6) Control potential threats to public health from beaver damage and issue permits to allow the trapping of beavers. 7) Regulate tobacco sales to minors and enforce environmental tobacco smoke regulations. 8) Permit and inspect body art establishments, tanning salon establishments and massage therapists. 9) Keep records on all of the above.

The Monson Board of Health consists of a governing board of up to five appointed members, trained and certified by the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards, a part-time Health and Title V Agent and an Administrative Assistant. Meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 110 Main St. and are open to the public. Questions or appointments to meet with the Board may be addressed by calling the Board of Health office at 267-4107 or emailing to boh@monson-ma.gov. Updates and information about the Board, as well as links to information concerning public health may be found at the town web site: http://www.monson-ma.gov/Public_Documents/MonsonMA_Health/index

The Board of Health, along with all the offices formerly at 29 Thompson St., completed the move to the new building at 110 Main St. on November 17th. Although, it is smaller than the previous office, it is well designed for efficiency and easily accessed from the parking lot via the rear entryway. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Claire Forgues is our Administrative Assistant. The Board would like to thank everyone involved in making this move as smooth and successful as it was, particularly Paul DeMaio for his tireless efforts in this regard.

The Board of Health is responsible for ensuring that new wells being installed will be done correctly and providing clean drinking water for the residents. The Board of Health also enforces regulations on commercial floor drains, which helps to ensure the removal of harmful chemicals that could get into the ground water and pollute the town's wells.

The Board of Health, together with the Conservation Commission, continues to oversee the implementation of the state Beaver Bill. When problems arise with beavers damming up waterways and flooding resident's property or public ways, the Board of Health inspects the situation to determine if a public safety or health impact is present. When a health or safety issue is present, the Board grants a permit for the trapping of the beaver. 2014 was a very active year for beavers with an increase in the number of problems arising in regard to access and safety on public ways, as well as on the property of private residences. In coordination with the appropriate state agencies, the Conservation Commission, the Highway Department, and our Health Agent, Lori McCool, these situations were successfully dealt with. For the coming year, the Board of Health is developing policies to increase communication and coordination efforts with the goal, wherever possible, of proactively minimizing the impacts of beaver activities before a crisis develops.

In 2014, the Board of Health, thanks to a Community Innovation Challenge Grant administered by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, began to participate in a community health initiative, which includes sharing the services of a public health nurse with some of our neighboring communities. Under this program, a community health assessment was begun in the Fall and is currently ongoing. Results will be available this Spring.

This past year was another good year for our semi-annual Bulky Day. Bulky Day is held at the Quarry Hill School on the first Saturday in May and October each year. These collection days allow members of our trash program to dispose of large, bulky trash items, as well as tires, propane tanks, car batteries and scrap metal. This year the May 3rd Bulky Day was sponsored by Republic Services. There was no charge for disposal of any item on this day. This year, the Board of Health was able to add ProShred to the list of services offered. ProShred services will continue to be offered yearly during the May Bulky Day. Recycling bins for every other week curb side collection are available at Bulky Day and also can be purchased from the Collector's office at a cost of \$5.00 each.

On April 26th, at the town offices, the BOH held its second annual Drug Take-back Day event. Expired or unused prescription and narcotic medications were accepted and disposed of according to DEA regulations. This prevented their possible illicit use or accidental ingestion.

This year the Board of Health reviewed and updated the fees associated with services provided within the department. These fees include such things as foods services/inspection, well inspection and various licensures. These fees had not been updated since 2002 and have now been brought up to date and in line with other local communities.

The Board of Health continues to monitor the incidences of West Nile Virus, EEE, and the Flu. Through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on-line portal, the BOH monitors the incidence of communicable disease in our community and follows up with information gathering and case reporting back to the MDPH.

The Board would like to thank Republic Services for awarding a \$750.00 scholarship to a Monson High School senior this year and also for their generous donation to the "Gifts to the Town" account. This year Republic Services donated two iron benches that will be placed in the green spaces at the back of the new Town Offices building in the Spring. Republic Services' community commitment and generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you all for your support and assistance.

This year Lorri McCool was honored with commendations from the Board of Health and the Board of Selectman for exceptional service with October 28th being declared "Inspector McCool Day" in recognition of her above and beyond efforts to assist the residents of Monson. Thank you Lorri for all your hard work and dedication to the Town of Monson.

The Board would like to thank members of the community for helping the Board of Health in their efforts this year. Evan Brassard, Town Administrator, has provided invaluable support and advice on many of the Board's programs along with Deborah Mahar, Financial Director. Also, much appreciated is our shared work with and mutual support from Liz Manley and the Medical Reserve Corps volunteers. The Board feels very fortunate to have Claire Forgues, as our Administrative Assistant and Lorri McCool as our Health/Title V Agent. John Morrell and the Highway Department employees have been of invaluable assistance, as has Dorothy Jenkins and her staff in the Collector's office. Chief Stephen Kozloski and the Monson Police Department have willingly provided help in many of the Board's efforts, including the assurance of public safety and traffic control at BOH events.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Payne, RN Chair Person
John (Beau) Schneider, RN
Vicki Alfano, RTR